# SOUVENIR OF THE GOLDEN JUBILEE

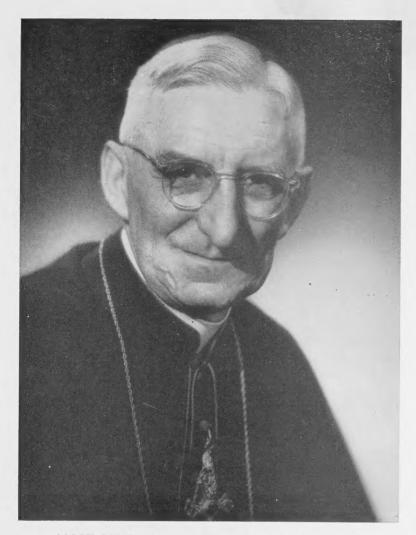


# OUR LADY of the ASSUMPTION PARISH

BEISEKER, ALBERTA

1908 - - - 1958





MOST REVEREND FRANCIS P. CARROLL, D.D. Bishop of Calgary

## A Message From Our Bishop

It is a sincere pleasure to offer Rev. A. E. Tennant and the Faithful of St. Mary's Parish, Beiseker, cordial congratulation on the occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the settlement of the parish. It is a thought to mark this anniversary by the narration of the parish history and by saving from oblivion the names and lives of its hardy founders and pioneers. All the zealous efforts and apostolic sacrifices of the years of growth and expansion are contained and symbolized in the magnificent edifice which is St. Mary's today—a worthy tribute to a glorious past and a credit to the Catholic good-will of the present. The parishioners of St. Mary's can be justly proud of its venerable history, rejoice in its present vigor and be encouraged to continue the Catholic example of their Fathers in the Faith. May God bless all who for a half century have enhanced the Glory of God and aided the salvation of souls in St. Mary's Parish, Beiseker.

> FRANCIS P. CARROLL, Bishop of Calgary

### SAINT MARY'S CHURCH, BEISEKER

In Thanksgiving and to Commemorate the Golden Jubilee of the Parish

A SOLEMN HIGH MASS IN HONOUR OF THE ASSUMPTION OF OUR LADY

ON SUNDAY, AUGUST 17th, 1958 at 7:30 p.m.

with His Excellency Bishop Carroll of Calgary in attendance

Celebrant—Rev. A. Tennant
Deacon—Rev. T. Smits
Sub-Deacon—Rev. Jas. Hagel
Sermon—Rev. M. McGreevy

In Loving Memory of former Parish Priests and those Old Timers who have passed on, a Requiem High Mass on Monday, August 18th, at 9:00 a.m.

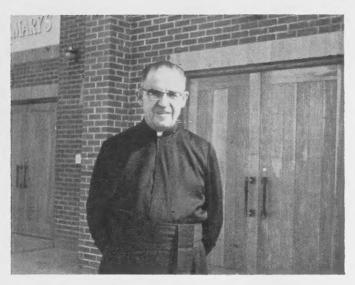


Congratulations
from
The Village
of
Beiseker

MAYOR L. L. SCHMALTZ

The Social and Material way of life in our village and community has become a notable success because of the sincerity and hard work of our pioneer settlers as well as those that followed. To have had this acknowledged success we must also consider our Spiritual way of life; therefore we must not overlook our churches. The first of these churches to play a major part in our development being St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church. Its progress too has given our village much encouragement and recently a new church building has been completed—the most modern and largest for miles around and of which all citizens can justly be proud.

As Mayor of the Village of Beiseker, together with the village council and its citizens, we wish to extend our warmest congratulations to St. Mary's Parish on the celebration of its Golden Jubilee and also to pay tribute to the many priests who have served this territory.



The Present Pastor, Rev. A. Tennant

### SAINT MARY'S PARISH, BEISEKER 1908 - 1958

### DEDICATION

By the Pastor, Father A. Tennant

On November the First, 1950, His Holiness Pope Pius XII, solemnly declared, with all the authority of his high office, "That it is a dogma revealed by God that Mary was assumed into heavenly glory in Body and Soul." By this proclamation, the Catholic Faith did not actually become richer in import or contents, for it concerned a truth which has belonged to the Christian Deposit of Faith from the very beginning.

If one might wish to find in our present day and of local interest, an indisputable proof of the antiquity of Christian belief in the bodily assumption of the Blessed Mother of God, the past history of the Catholic people of the Beiseker District in Alberta might well provide this. For contained in that Catholic Treasury of Faith and brought by their ancestors from their ancient homes in Germany at the end of the XVIII century to the vast southern plains of Russia and thence another hundred years later to the farming lands of the American Dakotas, this unshakeable belief in the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary and her loving care for her children, prompted these peoples to dedicate many of their new colonies and parishes in her name and under her protection.

Although many other favourite saints were suggested by the early settlers of Beiseker, it seemed inevitable that the proposal of Ludwig Schmaltz should prevail and it was unanimously agreed to give to the new settlement and parish the title of Our Lady of the Assumption.

With this thought in mind and asking for her continued solicitude, the pastor and parishioners of Saint Mary's at Beiseker, humbly and lovingly dedicate this Golden Anniversary Memento to the Blessed Mother of God and her Glorious Assumption.

### THE BEGINNINGS

The parish of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin is a rural territory which including the attached mission at Swalwell, extends from Keoma to the south and north to the boundary of Calgary Diocese. Of approximately six hundred souls in the parish, the greater majority are concentrated in and about Beiseker which village received its name in recognition of one Tom Beiseker of North Dakota who was a prominent director of the Calgary Colonization Company. It was this Company which first promoted settlement of the district. The first settler to establish a permanent home in this area with his family was Ludwig Schmaltz who arrived in August of 1907. The following spring, a special train of about fortytwo cars left North Dakota to arrive at Crossfield. Alberta on March 22nd, 1908. With this train came the other early families of the parish among whom were Joseph Schmaltz and his sons, Emmanuel Hagel and some of his sons, the Adam Schleppe, Joseph Silbernagel, Valentine Dennis, Jake Richter, Ignatz Hagel and Thos. Hagel families. In the succeeding years to 1912, other of well known names in the community came from North and South Dakota and elsewhere to their new homes in the parish.

### THE FOLLOWING YEARS

The first missionary priests to visit the district came from the community at Carstairs, the first of these being Reverend L. Forget, now Monsignor Forget of St. Patrick's Church, Vancouver, B.C. The Fathers from Trochu also paid occasional visits during these early years but the one priest who might be considered as the regular missionary in those days was Father Ciron also of Carstairs under whose direction the first church was built in 1910. Before the



The New Saint Mary's Completed in 1956

formation of the separate diocese of Calgary and after the Diocese came into being, first the Oblate Fathers of Calgary and later on the secular clergy were the priests in charge of the parish. Such names as Fathers Sylla, Nelz, Hermes, Russel, Murphy, Meyer, Carew and Beaton are well remembered during that time.

The beloved Father Michael McQuaid was parish priest for some years until his death when after a short stay by Father J. Nap Lebel as administrator, Right Reverend Monsignor E. McCoy, presently pastor of Medicine Hat, was appointed in the fall of 1932. Succeeding priests were the late Father Michael Fitzpatrick (1937-41) and Frederick Foote (1941). For the past sixteen and a half years, Reverend A. Tennant has been Parish Priest.

"The zeal of thy house has consumed me" are words of Holy Writ that very well might be applied to two exceptional men of the parish. For nearly 35 years until his death in 1945 "Uncle Jake" Hagel, and from that time until he too died in 1954, Nicholas Velker acted as sacristans, "Kirchen-vater" in the parish church. It could truthfully be said of them that they spent about half their time working in the temple of the Lord. It was the will of God but rather ironical that neither of them had the opportunity of expending their artistic talents and energies in the beautiful new church. Also, mention at this time must be made of a sort of medical-missionary in our midst since those early, difficult years. Although not of the same Faith, he not only ministered to the bodily needs of his patients in their illnesses but when the need arose many times poured the saving waters of Baptism on a new-born babe. The parishioners of Saint Mary's both of the past and present, hold in high respect and owe many thanks to Doctor W. G. Fowler of Acme. The same high traditions of the profession are also presently carried on by our own Dr. Verbeek.

### THE PRESENT

Through all these years the parish grew considerably and although the original frame church



The Old Saint Mary's 1910 - 1955



Mrs. Juliana Schmaltz and Mrs. Josephine Hagel

building had been enlarged, there became a desperate need for a new and larger church. In the spring and summer of 1944 after a new rectory was built to replace the old one destroyed by fire, a building fund for a new church was started and through the generosity and enthusiasm of the parishioners this soon reached a considerable sum.

In the spring of 1955, the first sod for a new church was turned by the oldest living member of the parish at that time, the late Ignatz Hagel. The construction of the new building of concrete and brick was immediately undertaken on a new site within the village limits. With the expert advice of the contractor, Nick Yurkevitch, the untiring and devoted efforts of both men and women in supplying voluntary labour and the unselfish and able administration of Father Maurice McGreevy, while the pastor was confined to hospital with a long illness, the beautiful new church, valued at over one hundred thousand dollars, was completed and equipped with new furnishings within the time of about one year. On July Fourth, 1956, before a large assembly of clergy and laity, the Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Beiseker was solemnly blessed by His Excellency Bishop Carroll. Following this ceremony, a solemn high mass in honour of the Assumption was celebrated by Father Tennant, assisted by Fathers M. McGreevy and James Whelihan, C.S.B. Right Reverend Monsignor J. Q. Killen of St. Basil's Church in Lethbridge preached the sermon on this occasion.

### THE GOLDEN JUBILEE

It is in this new church which is now a realization and completely free of debt, a credit to both the community and parish, that the Solemn Jubilee Mass of Thanksgiving in honour of our Lady's Glorious Assumption will be offered, as also within the week a Requiem High Mass as a memorial to all the pioneers and settlers who have passed on to their new and last home in eternity, and to whom we all owe so much.

# MEMOIRS OF A GREAT-GRANDMOTHER As recalled by Mrs. Julianna Schmaltz

In August, of the year 1907, we waved farewell to our friends from the train windows. We were now on our way to a new land, a land which promised us a home and a future for our family. We were leaving behind many relatives and friends and above all we were leaving our parish church. This was the greatest sacrifice of all. It was near this little church that both my husband's and my parents were buried. In this little church we had been married and in it our children had been baptized. Yes—we were leaving our church building, but our Catholic Faith we were taking with us. We seemed to know that in that faroff land in Canada, other churches would be built and there would be other pioneers, priests of God, who would come to care for our spiritual needs.

A few weeks before Christmas of that year and at the No. 1 Colonization House, of late years the A. M. Schmaltz farm, where we were living at the time, a stranger with a cutter and team drove into the yard one day. He came into the house where he removed his fur mitts and cap. And here, for the first time in this new land, we met a missionary priest from the community at Carstairs. He had come over thirty miles in the dead of winter to bring us the joys and consolations of the sacraments and Holy Mass.

Next morning, Father Forget said Mass in the front room. Ludwig and I, and our children knelt about the make-shift altar. We offered our thanks with the Holy Sacrifice. This was the first Mass in our district but the beginning of a flow of Masses which I'm sure will not cease until the end of time.

Already, in 1907, we had started to build our new home and by Easter Sunday, the next Mass was offered up in our house. This time we were not alone. The Hagels, Joseph Schmaltz, Schleppes, Silbernagels and Richters were with us. Thereafter, every Sunday everybody would come to the place of Ludwig Schmaltz. If a priest were there, we would all have the happiness of attending Mass; if not we would recite the Rosary, sing our hymns in German and afterwards chant Vespers in Latin.

Joseph Schmaltz was the leader in the Rosary and hymns and also acted as "hebdomidarius" at Vespers, with the chanters of the psalms Mrs. Schleppe, Emmanuel Hagel, Jake Richter and Valentine Dennis, among others. After this, the horses were hitched to the wagons or sleighs, depending on the season of the year, and all would return to their own homes for another week.

In 1909, Father Ciron, also from Carstairs, stayed with us for three months to instruct the children for their first Holy Communion. The permanent altar in our front room was now in daily use. Seven children

made their Communions for the first time after this period of instructions, Mike and Barbara Schleppe, Joseph and Elizabeth Hagel, Pete and Elizabeth Silbernagel and our own daughter, Frances.

1909 was a memorable year in another way. For in that year we started the construction work on the first church which was finished and in use by 1910. But even then we did not have Mass every Sunday. However, we always carried on as usual with the rosary, hymns and Vespers.

As the years went by, our families increased in size and new faces appeared at the church. The church had to be extended again and again until this became impossible. After 45 years, the new Assumption Church was built of which we all feel so justly proud at this time.

Few of us are now left to look back over the past half century and to realize the progress which has come about. But for those of us who can, let us thank Almighty God for His bountiful goodness to us over these many years and let us beg of Him eternal peace for all those who have pioneered in this land with us and have now gone to their eternal reward. I will say in their names as Saint Paul once wrote. "I have run the race, I have fought the good fight and I have kept the faith."

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## THE LONG JOURNEY TO A NEW HOME

By James Hagel

The Great Plains of the Dakotas were not suitable enough for these pioneer German settlers. That is why, when early in the spring of 1907 Messrs. Sawyer and Kern, of the Calgary Colonization Co., were received with ready ears, when they expounded on the virgin land that lay waiting in central Alberta.

Believing with a grain of salt, the men decided to see for themselves. So later that spring, nine men, Adam Schleppe, Valentine Dennis, Ludwig Schmaltz, Emmanuel Hagel, Ignatz Hagel, Joseph Silbernagel, and Jacob Richter travelled with Sawyer to this new land.

Liking what they saw and seeing a future in this new country, they bought and then returned home to dispose of their property.

Ludwig Schmaltz, because of illness, was advised to sell his store and return to the farm. This was soon done, and in August of 1907, he arrived in Crossfield with three carloads of stock and machinery. Ludwig proceeded to the No. 1 Company House where he was soon joined by his wife and family. They lived at the Company House until the following year, awaiting the completion of the own home.

In November of 1907, Joseph Schmaltz, Ignatz and Peter-Hagel and Joseph Silbernagel came out to



An Old-Time Farm Home Where Masses
Were Offered in Early Years
THE FARM OF LUDWIG SCHMALTZ

build barns to house the stock when it arrived. The ends of the barns were fixed for living quarters to provide shelter for the families on their arrival the following spring.

Mission accomplished, the two Josephs and Ignatz returned to North Dakota in time to celebrate their last Christmas south of the border. Peter stayed behind and spent the winter with Ludwig Schmaltz at the Company House.

Spring came early in 1908, and with spring the winter plan was put into effect.

Under the direction of Mr. Kern the expedition was soon made ready to begin the long, slow trip to the northwest. The Soo Line freight stopped in Pollock, near Strasburg, N.D., to attach three freight cars loaded with stock and equipment belonging to Valentine Dennis. Val, his family, and helper Magnus Miller, boarded the rear car provided for the immigrants. On they moved through Artus where Adam Schleppe, Jake Richter and their families boarded and their cars were attached. Later on, three more cars were added at Wishek and the Joseph Schmaltz family entered the immigration car. Last stop—Harvey, North Dakota, where the train was completed and the families of Joseph Silbernagel, Emmanuel Hagel, Ignatz Hagel and Tom Hagel boarded the passenger car.

Late in the afternoon the special train made up of 42 cars steamed out of Harvey heading northwest through Portal and by way of Saskatchewan, Medicine Hat, Calgary—final destination, Crossfield, Alberta. Within the immigration car, the women were preparing the evening meal on the stoves at the rear of the car. They returned to their places, fed the family, then settled down to pass the evening discussing the new land. The men were hopeful, ambitious, and anxious to turn the virgin sod. The womenfolk were doubtful, yet willing to undergo any hardship to provide a home and future for their young families. But

they were also concerned about the not-so-good in this exotic and fertile land which the menfolk had@ been speaking of all winter long.

Out in the boxcars things were not uneventful. How could they be with about twenty young men who cared for the stock, and could get from one boxcarto another? The spring weather was magnificent and lured the boys to the top of the car where Jake Richter and one of the boys entertained with a mouthorgan and guitar. I can imagine that many an old German song was aired on top of those boxcars as the slow-moving freight toiled with its load through the southern hills of Saskatchewan. Indian villages were seen along the South Saskatchewan. "It must be a warm country—people live in tents," was one comment heard.

On Saturday evening, March 22, the new settlers arrived at Calgary. The train crew was satisfied that this was a good spot to spend the week-end. The passengers disagreed, for obvious reasons. Soon Mr. Kern found a tired old locomotive which took them to their destination, Crossfield.

As Sunday, March 23 dawned, a beautiful day was in store. Now for the first time many settlers gazed upon their adopted land. As they looked to the east they could see only one vast sea of prairie grass as far as the horizon—a challenge indeed, for the most adventuresome pioneer. The camp soon bustled with activity. The unloaded cattle were herded together and the 20 mile trek across country was begun. The horses were led from the cars. They alone were allowed to observe the day of rest. Tomorrow they would take the settlers to their final destination and in the years to come they would supply the indispensable horse-power which converted our district into rich farmland.

Sunday evening found cowboys, J. H. and Felix at a mid-way ranch with their herd. They locked the cattle up in the corral and they themselves spent the night in the hayloft.



A Modern Farm of Today The J. H. Schmaltz Farm

Back in Crossfield everything was ready by Sunday evening to start the cross-country trip at dawn. By Monday morning spring had reversed to winter. The immigrants faced the first of many spring blizzards. Undaunted, they hitched the teams to the loaded wagons and began the journey.

All day long they were exposed to the biting wind and drifting snow. By late afternoon they arrived at the Rosebud coulee. Here was a challenge for the teams, who had grown soft over the winter months and had already pulled heavily loaded wagons many a weary mile through a driving snow storm.

With up to eight-horse teams they pulled the wagons up and over the hill. By the time the last wagon was up, two of the young trouble shooters, Ed Hagel and a young Russian man were left behind in the vicious storm with the last loaded wagon. Late that same night they were found fatigued, hungry, cold and perhaps afraid.

The cattle had arrived earlier in the afternoon and many were separated and driven to their respective homes. That night the temperature dropped to eight degrees below zero, and the company house was overflowing with guests. All beds were filled, front room and kitchen were converted into sleeping quarters and the overflow was found deep in the hay in the barn loft.

The days, weeks, and months that followed were taken up with the establishment of livable family quarters, and finding feed and water for the stock. Soon new barns and houses were seen rising to serve their builders, to add personality to the land and to occupy a spot in our history. Soon the anxious plowman lent his strength to the life-giving soil and we hear of many a man spending that first spring, summer and fall on the seat of a one bottom plow.

These people came to stay. With faith and determination they built their homes and broke their lands. Their deep Catholic Faith inspired them to build a church the year after they arrived and to dedicate it to the Blessed Mother of God. During that same year of 1909, the first school was built to give the youngsters the benefits of a learning of which many of their fathers and mothers had been deprived. The deep concern of these early pioneer parents for religious and educational values has given their children and grandchildren chances to be on equal footings with any of their neighbours.

Only a few are left who can now say, "Fifty years ago, I came to the Beiseker District." But many of us can say, "My parents, or my grandparents, or my great-grandfather and great-grandmother came here fifty years ago." It is these truly great Jubilarians both living and dead which we salute on the occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the parish of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary at Beiseker, Alberta.

It was indeed a "Long Journey to a New Home", but it was also well worth the effort.

# Short Family Histories of the Pioneers

The first Catholic family to come to the Beiseker district, arrived in August of 1907. LUDWIG SCHMALTZ and his wife the former Julianna Vetter had nine children born in North Dakota, three of which died in their infancy. Three boys, Peter, Michael and Valentine and three girls, Mary, Frances and Carolina accompanied their parents to the new home in Canada. Peter and his wife, Iphrosina Ternes, first farmed and then he entered the garage business now carried on by his sons. Peter died suddenly in 1954, November 20th. Michael married Anna Marie Hagel and now resides in Calgary. Val, first a farmer and later a grain buyer, married Helen Heck and now resides in Beiseker. Mary and Frances married brothers Felix and Edward Hagel while Carolina's husband is a nephew of the others, William Hagel. Alberta-born daughters are Matilda, Mrs. Tony Velker of Rockyford and Margaret, Mrs. Walter Zacher of Calgary. Ludwig Schmaltz died April 28th, 1928. Mrs. Schmaltz at the age of 88 years is still active and attends daily Mass and Holy Communion.

### THE TRAIL-BLAZERS Arrived March, 1928

EMMANUEL HAGEL and his wife, Margaret Schumacher are now both dead and resting in the Beiseker Catholic Cemetery. They were married in Russia 90 years ago and eight of their sons were born there. They came to America in 1886. These sons were Ignatz, Jacob, Emmanuel N., Thomas, Frank, Joseph, Anton and Peter whose individual Beiseker histories are given below and Francis who never migrated permanently to Canada. Born in the States were Margaret who married another Beiseker old-timer Matt Schmaltz, and died in 1920, Edward, who farmed for many years in the district, married Frances Schmaltz and left a large family to mourn his death, September 1st, 1952. Felix, the youngest and only living child is now in business in Beiseker. His wife is Mary Schmaltz.

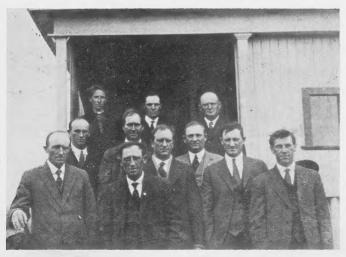
JOSEPH SCHMALTZ (died at age 87, October 1st, 1952) and his wife Mechtilda (died at age 69, May 5th, 1937) although now resting in Saint Mary's Cemetery at Beiseker, might well and justly be proud of the endeavours of their family of nine boys and one girl. Matthew, the eldest, although now retired after many years in municipal affairs as both reeve and councillor is still keenly interested not only in in his own extensive farm but also in the church and the social and agricultural interests of the community. After the death of his first wife, he later married Anna Leibel and with their family now away, they reside in the village. Joseph, "J. H.", Provincial Master Farmer of 1952, has been tireless in giving of his time and energy to the educational, political



The Late Joseph Schmaltzs



The Late Ludwig Schmaltz and Mrs. Schmaltz



The ten sons and one daughter of Emmanuel Hagel.

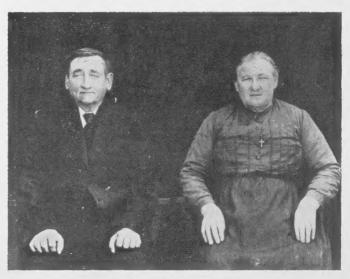
The only one still living is Felix, centre top row.



The Late Joseph Silbernagels



The Late Adam Schleppes



The Late Emmanuel Hagels

and recreational life of the whole district. His wife is the former Barbara Senger. The parish and community suffered great losses in the sad deaths at early ages of two of the sons: Adam (married to Frances Sander) and Andrew (married to Katherine Schwengler) in 1936 and 1940. Doctor Stephen is in Edmonton as Director of Medical Services for the Province after practising for many years in both Taber and Lethbridge. He has also been both secretary and president of the Alberta Medical Association. Anthony, "Tony", first postmaster of the Calgary suburb of Bowness, continues in that position. Anselm, "Slim", (wife: Carolina Zaar) is now also in Calgary, The two youngest and native Albertans, Carl, having had experience as both a teacher and grain buyer, now farms with his wife Katherine Schwartzenberger east of town, and Ludwig, "Louis", locally in the garage business has served on the village Council and is now mayor of Beiseker. He married Jennie Schwartzenberger. Mechtilda (Mrs. Tony Sander) the only girl of this large family, has brought up a large family of her own on the farm west of town.

A large pioneer family of four boys and nine girls is the IGNATZ HAGELS. Mrs. Hagel (nee Josephine Singer) living in town with an unmarried daughter, Barbara, attends daily mass and communion. Of the boys, Joseph married to Anna Schwengler, died recently, November 28th, 1956. William and Raphael are successful farmers of this district. They are married to Carolina Schmaltz and Buella Miller respectively. Anna Marie (Mrs. Mike Schmaltz) lives in Calgary. The younger married daughters, Mary (Mrs. Adam Velker), Cecilia (Mrs. W. J. Lavoie), Veronica (Mrs. Don Smith), and Agatha (widow of the late Bill Velker), all reside in the town. Ignatz Hagel died March 23rd, 1956, and one daughter, Elizabeth (wife of Magnus Miller) died March 5th, 1930. One of the sad events of the long train journey from North Dakota was the death of a child, Emmanuel by name. The little body was brought along to be buried in the first grave in the parish on the farm site. Later, when a small girl, Magdalena, passed away, both were buried in the church cemetery.

VALENTINE DENNIS and his wife, although numbered among the early pioneers of Beiseker, later moved to Prelate, Saskatchewan, where both died. It was from Mr. Dennis' farm that the first land for a church site was donated.

Another family, remaining only a short time was JACOB RICHTER and his wife, Ludwiga Schmaltz. They also moved to Prelate and later to California where both died. They had two children, John and Eva.

ADAM SCHLEPPE (died December 17th, 1934) and his wife Barbara Geisinger (died April 26th, 1942)

had seven children. Two of these, Michael and Barbara (Mrs. Matt German), still reside in Beiseker. Valentine died here in 1941, while two others, Baltser and Adam, reside in Kelowna, B.C. Two of the latter's children, Baltser Jr. and Mrs. E. P. Hagel are on district farms. Brigetta (Mrs. B. Usselman) and Eva (Mrs. John German) live in Calgary at present. The JOSEPH SILBERNAGELS came to this country

with eight of their children. Mr. Silbernagel died January 7th, 1926, and his wife, Eva Bachmier, January 10th, 1944. Of the children who came with them three have also passed on. William as a young man and Elizabeth (Mrs. Robt, Bosch) in 1938, and Rose (Mrs. Leo Bosch) in 1951. Peter lives in Water Valley, Tony at Elnora and Carrie (Mrs. Carl Schmaltz) in northern Alberta. The twins of the family, Mary (Mrs. Bill Schwengler), and Stephen, married to the former Barbara Geo. Schmaltz, are local residents. Natives of Alberta are Julia, born shortly after the arrival here in July of 1908, later married Tony Schwengler and passed away in 1954, Walter died as a child of only four years, Frances residing here is Mrs. Chris Schmaltz. Felix and his wife had five daughters. All have left the district. Kasper Silbernagel and his wife, Theresa Deitz, farm the ancestral lands. The name of the Silbernagel School District originated with this pioneer family.

An early business man of the district was THOMAS "Tom" HAGEL. He was owner of the first general store to serve the settlers, later taking up farming on land still occupied by two unmarried children Albert and Loretta. Mr. Hagel pre-deceased his wife Anna Marie Schwengler on Aug. 29th, 1939. She died February 26th, 1954. Three children were born to them before they came to Alberta, Emmanuel B., "Pat", local agent for the Alberta Wheat Pool and married to Mary Barry, Margaret (Mrs. John Wollersheim) of Coutts, and Annie with her husband George Randall farming in a big way in the Keoma district. The remaining children were all born here. They are, two daughters Helena (Mrs. Tony Hagel) and Mary (Mrs. Ben Weisgerber), both of Schuler, Alta. Barbara is employed at Warner and Mrs. Pete Zacher (Clara) is in Calgary. Another son, Clemens died September 26th, 1955, leaving his widow Irene Krenzel and a young family to mourn his loss.

Two single men of note to arrive with these early settlers were MAGNUS MILLER and PETER HAGEL, the latter coming as early as 1907. Both later married in this district. Magnus Miller now making his home in town, had two sons and three daughters from his first wife Elizabeth Hagel who passed away in March of 1930. Later he married Miss Emma Wende who lovingly cared for the young family. A son, Joseph, makes his home and farms in the Acme district. He married Delaine Severens.

Pete Hagel was the first to marry in the new parish. His wife is the former Anna German, now living in Kelowna, B.C., where most of her family also reside. Peter and his wife were blessed with seven sons and one daughter, none of whom are in this district at present. Peter died August 27th 1945, and is buried in St. Mary's Cemetery, Beiseker.

## SHORTER SKETCHES OF FAMILIES ARRIVING LATER — UP TO 1912

The ANTON HAGELS might very well be included in the group of "Trail Blazers" above, as he and his wife, Rose Schlachter, came to Beiseker as early as the fall of 1908. Active as a farmer and in the affairs of the district until his recent death April 18th, 1956, Anton left many sons to carry on after him in farming hereabouts, Leo, Frank Jos., Jacob, Alphonse and Edward all married and with families, and also an unmarried son, Marcus. Married daughters are Mrs. Felix G. (Agnes) Schmaltz of Beiseker, Mrs. M. (Rose) Knievel and Mrs. Jack (Bertha) Bourbonnie. Now residing in Calgary are the eldest married son, as also Tony and Margaret with their mother.

CARL TERNES (died 1933) and his wife Gertrude Kuss (died 1948) have two sons, Isadore "Ike" and and Mike successfully farming here and at present in Calgary a retired farmer, Oswald. Their only daughter lives here. She is Mrs. Peter Schmaltz (Iphrosina). The Ternes came as early as 1909 to the district.

WILLIAM "Bill" SCHISSEL came on April 10th, 1910, as manager of the Crown Lumber Co. Later in 1914, he married Matilda Marie Kaut of St. Paul, Minn., and they had three children, Robert and Gerald farming here, and Maxine, married and a Government Nurse at Browning, Mont. Although Mr. Schissel passed away March 9th, 1940, his widow still resides in Beiseker.

EMMANUEL N. HAGEL came with his family from south of the border, first to Lethbridge and three years later to Beiseker in 1910 to go into the store business with his father-in-law, Jacob Held. Of his large family of sons and daughters, none remain here but are in many places in western Canada and the Northwest States. In partnership with E. N. Hagel, JACOB HELD, later returned to Harvey, N.D., where both he and his wife are now buried. They left one adopted son behind in the Beiseker Cemetery, and the wife of Mr. Held's partner, E. N. Hagel was also brought up by them as a daughter. The bell of the old church and which still rings out from the tower of the new Saint Mary's was a joint donation of the Dennis and Held families and in honour of Mrs. Held was given the name "Barbara".

Towards the end of 1910 there also came to this district Mr. and Mrs. MAX ALBERT. One daughter, Julia, might well be called Beiseker's first vocation, as she entered the religious life in Milwaukee, Wis.,

as far back as 1914. After Mr. Albert's death in 1927, Mrs. Albert lived until her recent death in 1957 with another daughter, Rose, in the City of Calgary.

Although none of the FELIX BACHMEIERS are here at present, they, with their offspring Eva (Mrs. Jos. -Silbernagel), Julia, Michael, Lucy and Marie, must also be numbered among the old-timers of late 1910. The old-time family of GABRIEL SCHWENGLER and his wife, Maria Eva Schmidt, must not be forgotten among the first families of that time. Married in Russia, they farmed until 1950 when they retired to town to celebrate their Golden Wedding in 1951 Mr. Schwengler passed on in 1956 leaving three sons to carry on his life's work as a farmer, William, Anton and Simon. A son, Nicholas, also lives with his mother and three married daughters survive. Anna, Katherine and Margreth. Another name well remembered is that of Mr. and Mrs. JOHN USSELMAN and children, Sebastian, Anton, Margaret, Josephine, Emmanuel and George whose whereabouts although now largely unknown must be numbered among our pioneer Catholics. They came originally from South Dakota. Another not to be left out is ZENO REDDING on the farm southeast of town, still hale and hardy. He is the father of two sons.

No history of the period would ever be complete without some space given to the SCHARTZENBERGER clan, the surname with all of 16 letters. Wilhelm Schwartzenberger and his wife, Anastasia Giesinger, came from South Dakota also. Although two little girls died as children, seven married daughters survive, Katherine and Frances (Mrs. Val Schleppe and Mrs. Jos. Verhaest of this parish) as also Mary, Rose, Barbara, Cecilia and Ruth (Mrs. Carl L. Schmaltz). Three sons are deceased, Joseph and Andrew. Tony lives in Calgary while Edward and Bill are prominent farmers of this locality. Mr. Schwartzenberger died in 1942 but Grandmother Schwartzenberger may be seen most every morning at Holy Mass.

At her home in Beiseker is Mrs. Barbara Neubauer, the only daughter of old-timer JACOB HAGEL of this 1910 period whose name as "Uncle Jake" will never be forgotten as sacristan of the church for many years until his death in 1945.

Attached to Beiseker Parish is the Mission at Swalwell, twenty-two miles to the north. While Monsignor McCoy was pastor, a small but substantial church was completed. This building was made possible through the efforts of the small local congregation together with the good offices of the Church Extension Society and the parents of Miss K. E. Wickett of Toronto in whose memory the little chapel was given the title of Saints James and Catherine.

Swalwell also has its share of old-timers, as the late Lewis Hanses cames from Idaho to homestead here as far back as 1903. His daughter and her husband, Mr. and Mrs. Ben Hongel, still farm the land

of the original homestead. Though somewhat later, the names of other parishioners to be remembered would be the Powers and the Primes.

The Grainger District which received its name from another old-time family of which one continues to farm east of Beiseker (Frank Grainger), also had some early Catholic families to settle there. Joseph Heffernan took up a homestead in 1908 followed one year later by his father and the rest of the family. One of the Heffernan girls, Ada, married Robert Little and of their children, one daughter, Mrs. Harry Simmonds, resides in Beiseker. Joseph Heffernan died in Calgary in 1953 and was predeceased by his father in 1923.

While reviving the memory of early families and individuals, it is only right and just that mention should be made with respectful and grateful remembrance of the former Bishops of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Calgary. Truly a pioneer indeed the Most Rev. JOHN T. McNALLY and his successors Most Rev. JOHN T. KIDD and Most Rev. PETER J. MONAHAN, all of whom made Episcopal Visitations to the Beiseker Parish, as well as the saintly Bishop of Saint Albert, Most Rev. EMIL LEGAL, O.M.I., in whose vast territory this parish had its beginnings.

### **OUR TOWN**

Although most parishes are established in centres of Catholic population, it might truthfully be said that Beiseker rather grew up around the parish. The construction of the first church was started in 1909, and it was only with the arrival of the first train on the new C.P.R. branch in 1910 that the village had its humble start, with the old Grand Trunk, now the C.N.R., coming this far on its way from Edmonton to Calgary in 1912. With the business centre moving from the vicinity of the No. 1 Colonization Farm to the townsite in 1910, among the first to open up for business were the Hagel Brothers, Tom and E. N., as also Bill Schissel and Jacob Held, of the Catholic community.

The "hamlet" of Beiseker took on the status of a "village" in 1921, and although it has never had any notable increase in population, at present only about 400 souls, it surely has improved vastly in modern facilities-the Calgary Power in 1928, watersewage in 1953 and the hope of natural gas soon, as well as an up-to-date community Memorial Hall (1948), a new six room Public School in 1951 with four rooms and an auditorium-gymnasium added in 1957, as also modern stores, garages, implement agencies, shops, six grain elevators and a co-operative seed cleaning plant. To the credit of Saint Mary's Parish, many Catholics have taken their rightful places in municipal and educational administration. in business, in the local Lions service club and in all farm organizations. Indeed the Village of Beiseker and the surounding district owe much to the active and loyal citizens of the Catholic Faith.

### PARISH ORGANIZATIONS

On this occasion of the Golden Jubilee of the Parish, no records could be considered in any way complete without at least a brief account of the various parish organizations which flourished during the course of the past fifty years. Some of these came into being, were active for a time and then seemed to melt away as time went on. But others have grown in numbers, remained virile and having given great support in all the parish activities in the past, continue to carry on with their important work at present. Credit must be given to the officers and active members of all these groups of sincere and generous parishioners who have given of their time and talents to the religious, financial and social activities and projects of Saint Mary's.

### THE CHOIR

As recounted in the early history of the Catholic Church in Beiseker, the early settlers brought with them as a part of their Catholic heritage, the singing and chanting of hymns in both German and Latin. Joseph Schmaltz Sr. might well be considered as the first local leader in this necessary part of the liturgical services in the pioneer days. Later on, it was through the direction and encouragement of Father Ciron, that Felix Hagel, with a natural talent for this, became both organist and choir leader. For all of about 40 years, he carried on unselfishly and efficiently in this capacity. Of late years, an all-male choir has been organized with creditable success under the leadership of Jerry Schissel with the necessity, however, of always having a lady at the console of the organ.

These organists have been Mrs. Lou Brosteaux, Rosemarie Wald (Mrs. Corry) and Rose Marie Meidinger. A large Junior Choir of boys and girls from six years to sixteen, under the capable direction of the local school principal, Lorne Bunyan, has a large repertory of Benediction Hymns, other pieces of Church Music and even one complete Mass in Latin. Frank Plante, a former school principal, was instrumental in the organization of this Junior Choir. At the present time Dianne Schmaltz is organist for this youthful group.

### THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE

Without doubt, from the very beginning of the Parish, the good wives and mothers banded together as is always the case, in such groups as an Altar Society to further the spiritual, social and in a very realistic way, the material welfare of the Parish. However, with the establishing of a unit of the Catholic Women's League of Canada, this work grew in efficiency and magnitude until today having a large membership of close to a hundred, its contribution to the Church as a whole cannot be ignored. On the original

charter, granted on January 28th, 1930, the names of Mrs. Matt Schmaltz and Mrs. M. M. Schissel appear as first President and Secretary. Father McQuaid was the first Director. Presidents of the "League" since that time have been: Mrs. A. A. Wald, 1931-32, 1938-39-40, 1952-53-54, 1956-57-58; Mrs. A. Schwartzenberger, 1932-33; Mrs. John Goetz (deceased), 1933-34-35, 1937-38, 1940-41-42; Mrs. Matt Schmaltz, 1935-36-37; Mrs. Adam Velker, 1942-43-44, 1946-47-48; Mrs. Frank Lyczewski, 1944-45-46, 1950-51-52; Mrs. E. B. Hagel, 1948-49-50; Mrs. Jerry Schissel, 1954-55-56. Mrs. Adam Velker is now again President beginning her fifth term since 1942. We are also justly proud of two members serving in important posts outside the local Unit, Mrs. E. B. Hagel as Provincial President and Mrs. A. A. Wald on the Diocesan Council. Certainly, a goodly share of the credit for help in raising funds for the new church and other parochial projects must go to the wonderful ladies of the Catholic Women's League.

### KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

With quite a number of men in the parish belonging to the Knights of Columbus (some now, for over twenty-five years), it is only reasonable to expect that they should form the nucleus and be the guiding spirits in the formation of a Catholic Men's Club to be known as the Columbus Club which functioned very efficiently for a great number of years until the local K. of C. Council was brought into being. Supreme Office granted a charter to Father McQuaid Council No. 3398 of Beiseker on the thirteenth day of May, 1951. The first Grand Knight elected was A. E. "Tony" Hagel. Since that time, succeeding Grand Knights have been Louis L. Schmaltz, Mike Stinn, Jerry Schissel and E. B. "Pat" Hagel. Since the inception of the Order in Beiseker, Felix P. Schmaltz has given unstintedly of his time as a very capable Financial Secretary. As of July 1st of this year, W. J. Lavoie took into his hands the reins of the Council as Grand Knight. Indeed it might be truly said that the close to eighty Knights of St. Mary's Parish have done their best in all ways to live up to their unofficial motto as "the right arm of the Church".

### YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS

At one time, especially during the regime of Monsignor McCoy, the Children of Mary was a flourishing sodality for the girls and young ladies of the Parish. Also, later on during the 1940's a Girl Guide Company under the control of the two Ruths, Mrs. Baltser Schmaltz and Mrs. Carl L. Schmaltz was a credit to the leaders, members and the community. Although like many good things these have now disbanded for the present. Saint Mary's Youth Club first organized December 11th, 1938, and later known as the C.Y.O., in spite of its usual ups and downs

prospered with as many as one hundred and twenty members at times, and again as of late with so many young people taking employment in the cities, has to be revived. According to the existing records, the first officers in 1938 are given as: President, Pius Schmaltz; Vice-President, Nick Velker; and Secretary, Gerald Schissel. The activities of this group down through the years has been many and varied from Marriage Preparation Courses to sponsoring at one time an almost semi-professional baseball team. Dramatics seems however to have been the most famed pursuit of this Youth Organization with many worthwhile plays and concerts to its credit. Mention here must be made of "Moe" Bettin (now of Creston, B.C.) who excelled for many years as both director and performer. A highlight of the Club's efforts in this regard was the winning of the Bishop Carroll Trophy in the Diocesan Drama Festival for the best play with Ray Schwartzenberger also taking the best actor award. This drama festival was held in Beiseker in April of 1950 and others in the cast of the winning play "Two Crooks and a Lady" were Vicky Hagel, Barbara A. Schmaltz, Grace Schmaltz, Albert Krenzel and Slim Sander. Other and later plays presented by the C.Y.O. Players before large and appreciative audiences, were Moliere's "The Miser" with Tony Hagel in the title role, "Nine Girls" and "Little Women". For all of these dramatic presentations Mrs. Frank J. Schmaltz (now of Sparwood, B.C.) was the very excellent makeup artist. With the C.Y.O. once more on its way up under the leadership of President Lewis Schmaltz, although the membership is not as large as in bygone years, there is once more an excellent opportunity of taking its rightful place in the life of the parish and the community as a whole. In speaking of youth organizations in the parish, the servers at God's Holy Altar must not be left out. Saint Mary's has always been fortunate in having an abundance of faithful and devoted Altar Boys. At the present, having been accepted into the Knights of the Altar with headquarters at Notre Dame, Indiana, we have twentythree members: ten grand knights, three knight commanders, one knight and nine apprentices. The officials among the boys are: John Richter, Aloys Sander, Bobby and Ronald Hagel.

### THE CONFRATERNITY OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

In Beiseker this Confraternity of ten active and about sixty associate members has confined its activities so far to the very important task of Religious Instruction to about one hundred and seventy-five school children of the parish.

The mission church of SWALWELL also has a small but very energetic Acme-Swalwell Unit of the Catholic Women's League. Mrs. W. D. MacDonaio of Grainger is President and Mrs. Bud Webb of Swal-Well, Secretary-Treasurer. Past Presidents have been Mrs. Leo J. Lavoie and Mrs. Ted Keintz.



Above: Sisters Rosita and M. Gemma, James and Martin Hagel and their Cousin, Sister Helen Clare

### LABOURERS INTO HIS HARVEST

If Saint Mary's at Beiseker as a community of staunch Catholics did not appear to supply its quota of vocations to the priesthood and religious life in the difficult, pioneer days of the past, this fault of late is in the process of being corrected. The whole parish is looking forward to a day sometime next spring when the first native of the parish, James Hagel, son of Mrs. Frances Hagel and the late Edward Hagel, will be ordained as a priest. Of this same family, one daughter, Selma (Sr. Rosita) is an Ursuline Sister in Chatham, Ont., and another boy, Martin, commences his theology course in the Edmonton Seminary this fall. The Ursuline Sisters also claim two other girls of the parish in Sister M. Gemma (Rita Lavoie) in Calgary, and with the Community in Drumheller, Vera Schmaltz (Sr. Helen Clare) daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Val Schmaltz of Beiseker. As mentioned in the family histories above, our very first vocation was as of 1914, Julia Albert. Also not to be forgotten are two Gallagher girls serving in orders in B.C. and the Northwest States, Eileen and Vera, daughters of one-time teachers at the Silbernagel School, Mr. and Mrs. Dominic Gallagher. Another young man who received all his grade schooling in Beiseker, Jack Bettin, is with the Franciscans in Quebec. He is the son of one-time residents Mr. and Mrs. Maurice Bettin now of Creston, B.C. Alois Sander, son of Mr. and Mrs. A. Sander, will enter the seminary this fall.

We sincerely believe this to be only the beginnig of a long procession of girls and boys of the parish who in the future will direct their footsteps towards serving God in the Religious Orders and the Diocesan Priesthood.

### FAMILIES OF THE PARISH - 1958

### Beiseker and District

Bernakevitch, Mr. and Mrs. Jos. Bosch, Mr. and Mrs. Jos. Brigan, Joseph Bunyan, Mr. and Mrs. Lorne Campbell, Mr. and Mrs. F. A. German, Mrs. Barbara Geysler, Mr. and Mrs. Leo Grainger, Mr. and Mrs. Fr. Hagel, Albert and Loretta Hagel, Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Hage!, Mr. and Mrs. Alois Hagel, Mr. and Mrs. Alph. Hagel, Mrs. Irene and Boys Hagel, Mrs. Josephine and Barbara Hagel, Mr. and Mrs. E. A. Hagel, Mr. and Mrs. E. P. Hagel, Mr. and Mrs. E. B. Hagel, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Jos. Hagel, Mrs. E. N. Hagel, Mrs. Jos. and Family Hagel, Mrs. Frances and Boys Hagel, Mr. and Mrs. Felix and Sons Hagel, Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Hacel, Mr. and Mrs. Jos. J. Hagel, Mr. and Mrs. Louis E. Hagel, Mr. and Mrs. Leo Hagel, Mr. and Mrs. Raphael and Son Hagel, Marcus and Mother Hagel, Mr. and Mrs. Ray Hagel, Mr. and Mrs. William and Son Harnack, Mr. and Mrs. A. G. Harnack, Mr. and Mrs. Cecil Heinzelmeir, Mr. and Mrs. M. Hempel, Mr. and Mrs. Harvey Hancherow, Mr. and Mrs. Jas. Hoemsen, Mr. and Mrs. Pete Hanlon, J. B. Jensen, Mrs. Carl Karakochuk, Mr. and Mrs. Rudy Kiprick, Mr. and Mrs. Jos. Krenzel, Mr. and Mrs. Anton Lang, Mrs. Dave Lavoie, Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Lyczewski, Mr. and Mrs. F. Mayer, Martin and Parents Meidinger, Mr. and Mrs. F. A. Miller, Mr. and Mrs. Magnus Miller, Mr. and Mrs. Ray Neubauer, Mrs. H. Nibourg, Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Olsen, Mrs. Stan Pfiefer, Mr. and Mrs. Geo. Plowman, Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Rauner, Mr. and Mrs. S. Richter, Mr. and Mrs. A.

Ross, Mrs. Lavina Sander, Mr. and Mrs. A. Schwartzenberger, Mrs. A. Schwartzenberger, Mr. and Mrs. Ed and Son Schissel, Mr. and Mrs. G. J. Schissel, Mrs. M. and Bob Schleppe, Mr. and Mrs. B. P. Schleppe, Mr. and Mrs. Mike Sempovich, Mr. and Mrs. A. Schmaltz, Mr. and Mrs. Baltser Schmaltz, Mr. and Mrs. Carl E. Schmaltz, Mr. and Mrs. Chris. Schmaltz, Mr. and Mrs. Felix G. Schmaltz, Mr. and Mrs. Felix P. Schmaltz, Mr. and Mrs. Geo. N. Schmaltz, Mrs. Geo. and Betty Schmaltz, Mr. and Mrs. J. H. and Sons Schmaltz, Mrs. Julianna Schmaltz, Mr. and Mrs. Louis L. Schmaltz, Mr. and Mrs. Leo J. Schmaltz, Mr. and Mrs. Matt Schmaltz, Mrs. Iphrosina Schmaltz, Mr. and Mrs. Peter Schmaltz, Mr. and Mrs. Tony Schmaltz, Mr. and Mrs. Val Schmaltz, Mr. and Mrs. Wendel Schwengler, Mrs. G. and Sons Schwengler, Anton Schwengler, Mr. and Mrs. F. A. Schwengler, Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Selzler, Mr. and Mrs. F. J. Selzler, Mr. and Mrs. Jack Silbernagel, Mr. and Mrs. S. Silbernagel, Mr. and Mrs. K. Simmonds, Mr. and Mrs. H. Smith, Mrs. Don Stinn, Mr. and Mrs. Mike Ternes, Mr. and Mrs. I. Ternes, Mrs. and Mrs. Jos. Ternes, Mr. and Mrs. Mike Ternes, Mr. and Mrs. Max Ternes, Mr. and Mrs. Robt. Tennant, Mrs. Clara Tetz, Mr. and Mrs. Otto Troidl, Mr. and Mrs. A. E. Velker, Mrs. Agatha Velker, Mr. and Mrs. Adam and Son Velker, Miss Chris and Mother Verbeek, Dr. E. and Mrs.

Verbeek, Mr. and Mrs. Alf.

Verbeek, Mr. and Mrs. John Verhaest, Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Verhaest, Mr. and Mrs. Jos. Wald, Mr. and Mrs. A. A. Zacher, Mr. and Mrs. John Acme-Bircham-Grainger-Swalwell

Doherty, Jack Heaton, Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Helgren, Mrs. C. Kostrosky, Mrs. A. G. Leyten, Mr. and Mrs. John and Harry Loggin, Mrs. H. Knight, Mr. and Mrs. Don Mattern, Mrs. F. and Son Merkosky, Mr. and Mrs. A. Miller, Mr. and Mrs. Jos. Miller, Casper Schwartzenberger, Mr. and Mrs. W. Schleppe Jos. and Mother Olejniczak, Mr. and Mrs. Jos. O'Hanlon, John Wittstock, Mr. and Mrs. F. Bradley, Les Lavoie, Mr. and Mrs. L. J. Kanderka, Mr. and Mrs. J. Kanderka, Mr. and Mrs. P. MacDonald, Mrs. Wm. Malaki, Mr. and Mrs. S. Muchka, Mr. and Mrs. F. Ryan, Michael Beogrie, Mrs. Thos. Hongel, Mr. and Mrs. Ben Grande, Mr. and Mrs. P. F. Keintz, Mrs. Ted Powers, Mr. and Mrs. M. Prime, A. V. and Daughter Webb, Mr. and Mrs. Bud

### Irricana-Keoma

Kent, Mrs. L.
Knight, Mrs. Robt.
McCarthy, Mr. and Mrs. H.
Sutton, Mrs. Robt.
Hingst, Mr. and Mrs. E. C.
German, Mr. and Mrs. J.
Malinowski, Mr. and Mrs. K.
Randall, Mr. and Mrs. Geo.
Randall, Mr. and Mrs. F.
Renchler, Mr. and Mrs. E.
Schwengler, Mrs. E. and Sons
Oberhofer, Mr. and Mrs. M. and Son
Schmaltz, Mr. and Mrs. Don
Webber, Mr. and Mrs. J.

With the Complement of Aurones Hatt Kelmak